

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 74

March 25, 1999, 7:38 p.m.
Page S-3391 Temp. Record

BUDGET RESOLUTION/Less Tax Relief, New Mandatory Child Care Spending

SUBJECT: Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 2000-2009 . . . S.Con. Res. 20. Domenici motion to table the Dodd modified amendment No. 160.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE FAILED, 40-57

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S.Con. Res. 20, the Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 2000-2009: will cut the debt held by the public (money that the Federal Government owes to creditors other than itself) in half over 10 years; will fully fund Medicare (all of the President's proposed \$9 billion in Medicare cuts were rejected; as a result, this budget will allow \$20.4 billion more in Medicare spending over the next 10 years); will save the entire \$1.8 trillion in Social Security surpluses over the next 10 years for Social Security; will provide for \$778 billion in net tax relief over the next 10 years (in contrast, the President's budget would increase the tax burden by \$96 billion net over 10 years), and will adhere to the spending restraints (discretionary spending caps and pay-go provisions) of the bipartisan budget agreement as enacted in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and the Taxpayer Reform Act of 1997 (the President's proposed budget, in contrast, would dramatically increase spending in violation of that bipartisan agreement, and would result in \$2.2 trillion more in total Federal debt at the end of 10 years than proposed in this Senate budget).

The Dodd modified amendment would reduce the tax relief provided by this bill by \$5 billion over 5 years and \$12 billion over 10 years and would increase the income security functional totals with the intention that the money would be spend as mandatory spending on the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program. In the statement of purpose on the amendment, a non-binding statement would also note that tax relief could be given to help "all working" families with employment-related child care expenses as well as families in which one parent stays home "to care for an infant."

After debate, Senator Domenici moved to table the amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

NOTE: After the vote, the amendment was adopted by voice vote.

(See other side)

YEAS (40)			NAYS (57)			NOT VOTING (3)	
Republicans (40 or 77%)		Democrats (0 or 0%)	Republicans (12 or 23%)		Democrats (45 or 100%)	Republicans (3)	Democrats (0)
Allard	Helms		Abraham	Akaka	Kennedy	Hutchinson ⁻²	
Ashcroft	Hutchison		Campbell	Baucus	Kerrey	McCain ⁻²	
Bennett	Inhofe		Chafee	Bayh	Kerry	Sessions ⁻²	
Bond	Kyl		Collins	Biden	Kohl		
Brownback	Lott		DeWine	Bingaman	Landrieu		
Bunning	Lugar		Frist	Boxer	Lautenberg		
Burns	Mack		Hatch	Breaux	Leahy		
Cochran	McConnell		Jeffords	Bryan	Levin		
Coverdell	Murkowski		Roberts	Byrd	Lieberman		
Craig	Nickles		Snowe	Cleland	Lincoln		
Crapo	Roth		Specter	Conrad	Mikulski		
Domenici	Santorum		Warner	Daschle	Moynihan		
Enzi	Shelby			Dodd	Murray		
Fitzgerald	Smith, Bob			Dorgan	Reed		
Gorton	Smith, Gordon			Durbin	Reid		
Gramm	Stevens			Edwards	Robb		
Grams	Thomas			Feingold	Rockefeller		
Grassley	Thompson			Feinstein	Sarbanes		
Gregg	Thurmond			Graham	Schumer		
Hagel	Voinovich			Harkin	Torricelli		
				Hollings	Wellstone		
				Inouye	Wyden		
				Johnson			

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

So far the Senate has rejected efforts to reduce the tax relief in this resolution in order to pay for new mandatory spending. We hope that it will continue on that course.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

Few issues are of greater concern to parents who must pay for child care than the availability of safe and affordable child care. In many families, particularly low-income, single-parent families, such child care does not exist. The Federal Government has a very effective program to address the problem, the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program, but it is severely underfunded. That program is a model of flexibility. Payments go directly to families, which can use them to pay for child care by churches, family members, neighbors, or institutional day cares. Though the program has worked very well in practice, and is strongly supported by the States, only enough money is currently provided to give assistance for 10 percent of the eligible children. By law, eligibility starts at 85 percent of a State's median income, but most States have set participation levels at much lower income levels simply because they only have enough money to help their most needy citizens pay for child care. Even with tough eligibility standards, many States now have very long waiting lists for assistance. In prior debates some Members have insisted that funding for this program should be provided under the discretionary spending cap. We have tried that approach for years but we have not been able to get Members to agree to cut funding for other programs in order to increase funding for this block grant. Therefore, as a practical matter, we do not believe that approach would succeed. We are hopeful, though, that Members will agree that it is a good idea to provide funding as mandatory spending, and to pay for the cost just by taking a small, \$12 billion bite out of the \$778 billion in tax relief planned for by this bill. The final element of this amendment is the equivalent of a sense-of-the-Senate statement. In the amendment's statement of purpose we have noted that after passing this amendment there would still be plenty of money left over to pay for a tax credit for "all" working Americans and for families in which one parent stays home to take care of an infant. Putting the word "all" in that statement means that any such credit we pass should be fully refundable, so working, poor Americans who do not pay any taxes would still be eligible for a child care refund. We know that when Members start voting on amendments in assembly-line fashion on budget resolutions there is a strong temptation on both sides of the aisle to vote along party lines, without any serious consideration as to the merits of the many amendments being considered. We urge our colleagues not to succumb to that temptation in this case. The Dodd amendment should be accepted.